

Preparatory Information

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Research has demonstrated the effect of preparatory information in reducing patient's negative responses to stressful experiences. Information about diagnostic procedures is unavailable to the clinicians due to rapidly changing technology and lack of exposure to the diagnostic experience. Therefore the purpose of this project was to disseminate procedure related sensory to the clinician to patients through the use of mainframe terminals and printers.

INTRODUCTION

Concrete, objective information has been demonstrated to have a positive effect on the patient's response to stressful diagnostic and treatment related experiences. Knowledge about this process has been developing since the early 1970's when Jean Johnson published her seminal work on the effect of accurate expectations on reactions to noxious medical exams [1,2]. Despite this knowledge, nurses do not consistently use this method in preparing patients for stressful health-related events. One explanation is that nurses are not actually present during most procedures and therefore do not have access to concrete information about what the patient experiences.

METHODS

In an effort to assist nurses to use the research related to the effect of using concrete, objective information, a project has been undertaken at the University of Kentucky Hospital. This project involves Nursing, Information Management and the diagnostic departments. An instrument was developed to elicit procedure-related sensory information from all clinical diagnostic and treatment departments. Individuals performing the procedures were

asked to include a description of the procedure room including lighting, temperature, and general appearance; concrete objective descriptions about the sensations that patients experienced during and after the procedures; the length of the procedure; and the length of time required for interpretation of the results.

These concrete, objective descriptions written in terms that patients could understand were entered into the hospital information system mainframe. Access to the on-line information is available via terminals located at every hospital nursing station, nursing charting room, diagnostic department and clinic workstation. An index listing all of the procedures allows registered nurses and other clinicians to select the information needed for a specific patient. Nurses can use the information for verbal explanations or can give the patient a screen print copy.

An added benefit for the nurse having such detailed information is the ability to more appropriately schedule events in the patient's day.

References

- [1]. J. Johnson. Effects of accurate expectations and behavioral instructions on reactions during a noxious medical examination. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.* 29:710-718.
- [2]. N. Christman., K. Kirchoff., M. Oakley. Concrete Objective Information. IN: G. Bulechek. Nursing interventions: essentials nursing treatments. W. B. Saunders, Philadelphia, 1992.